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SOLAR/1043-79/05



### Monthly Performance Report

HULLCO CONSTRUCTION
MAY 1979



National Solar Heating and Cooling Demonstration Program

**National Solar Data Program** 

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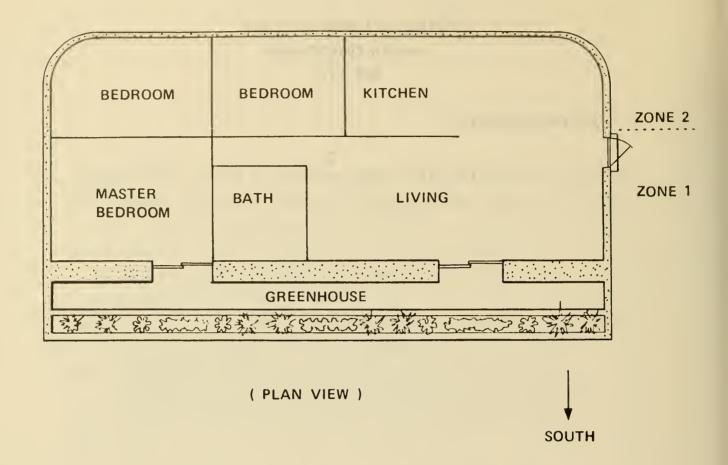
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### MONTHLY PERFORMANCE REPORT HULLCO CONSTRUCTION MAY 1979

### SYSTEM DESCRIPTION

The Hullco Construction solar energy system is a passive space heating system for a single family residence located in Prescott, Arizona. The south-facing building, illustrated in the drawings of Figure 1, is a combination greenhouse and direct gain passive system. Incident solar energy enters the building through approximately 400 square feet of double-glazed prefabricated Kalwall panels. Two sliding glass doors between the greenhouse and the house along with a window in the bathroom admit incident solar energy directly into the master bedroom, living room and bath areas of the house. Collected solar energy not used to satisfy the immediate building space heating demand is stored directly in the massive walls and floors of the building or indirectly in the 670 cubic feet of three to five inch diameter rock storage which is located under the floor of the north half of the building. Stored energy is released by low temperature radiation to satisfy the building space heating demand during periods of time when incident solar energy is not available.

Direct storage of collected solar energy is provided by the walls and floor of the building. The brick floor and the black painted north wall of the greenhouse provide solar energy storage for the greenhouse. The 12-inch thick, sand-filled concrete block greenhouse north wall acts as a Trombe wall, storing collected energy from the greenhouse during the day, and releasing the collected energy by radiation to the south part of the building at night. The 4-inch thick building concrete slab floor acts as direct solar storage, particularly in the living room and master bedroom areas where the floor is covered with Mexican tile masonry. Additional storage is provided by the 8-inch thick solid grouted concrete exterior insulated building walls on the north, east, and west perimeter of the building.



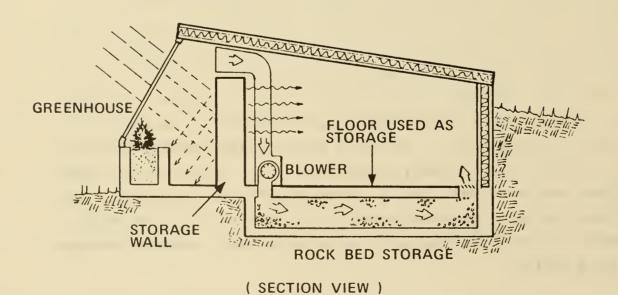


Figure 1. HULLCO CONSTRUCTION COMPANY SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM SCHEMATIC

Indirect storage of collected solar energy is provided by the 670 cubic feet of rock storage located under the north side of the building and by the 4-inch thick carpeted concrete slab floor poured on top of the rock. Solar energy collected in the greenhouse is transferred to the rock bed from vents at the end of the greenhouse through under-floor ducts by two one-third horsepower blowers located at the east and west ends of the greenhouse. After transferring energy to the rocks, the air returns to the greenhouse through the house from floor vents located at the north side of the building. The greenhouse fans operate when temperatures near the top of the greenhouse reach approximately 90°F. Energy stored in the rock is released through the carpeted concrete floor to the house.

Summer overheating protection is provided by venting of the greenhouse and by both natural and artificial shading of the greenhouse glazing. Natural shading of the greenhouse is accomplished by the use of an existing tree to the southeast of the structure. However, the tree, a juniper tree, does shade the greenhouse some during mornings even during heating season. Additional greenhouse shading can be provided by a redwood snow fence placed over the glazing. Draperies covering the sliding glass doors on the north wall of the greenhouse can be closed to prevent incident sunlight from entering the building. Nighttime venting of the building can be used to cool the energy storage masses, thus cooling the building during the day as energy generated inside the building is absorbed by the walls and floor. Daytime venting of the greenhouse is accomplished using a thermostatically controlled powered fan, located at the top of the greenhouse, to draw air through the house and out the top of the greenhouse.

Low building heating loads are maintained by the use of good energy conservation construction techniques. The north, east, and west walls are insulated on the outside of the concrete blocks with two inches of styrafoam with a total wall R-value of 11. Nine inches of fiberglass batt insulation is used in the roof to yield a roof R-value of 32. The entire perimeter of the concrete slab floor is insulated. A minimum of

window area is used on the north, east and west walls. The building is bermed four feet into the earth on the north and west sides.

Auxiliary energy for space heating can be supplied by either electric radiant heat panels, or by the wood-burning stove. The wood-burning stove uses outside combustion air. The ceiling-mounted electric radiant heat panels, located in each room, are controlled by individual room thermostats.

The predicted annual solar contribution to the building load is 80 percent. Design monthly building heating loads for the entire area, including the greenhouse, are approximately 11,000 Btu per heating degreeday.

### II. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

### A. Introduction

The month of May was a transition period from winter heating to summer overheat protection at the Hullco Construction site. Weather conditions were such that heating was required on some days while cooling would have been required on other days if overheating protection had not been adequate. However, a rather comfortable temperature environment was maintained inside the conditioned space. Overheating protection in the form of greenhouse shading and system venting was used to aid in moderation of potential temperature extremes while controlling interior relative humidity to acceptable values.

### B. Weather

The daily average incident solar energy on the greenhouse glazing was  $1,392 \text{ Btu/ft}^2$ -day, which was slightly below the long-term average of  $1,448 \text{ Btu/ft}^2$ -day derived from measurements at the Phoenix, Arizona weather bureau. The average outside ambient temperature was  $57^{\circ}\text{F}$ ,

slightly cooler than the long-term May average value for Prescott of 60°F. Daily average outside ambient temperatures varied considerably over the month from a low of 36°F on May 9 to a high of 66°F on May 23.

### C. System Thermal Performance

The passive solar space heating system was operated in a warm weather mode over most of the month of May. The redwood snow fence was in place over the greenhouse glazing during the entire month. Venting of the house and greenhouse was also used to prevent overheating of the conditioned space. Only a small requirement existed for space heating. This occurred in the second week of May as outside ambient temperatures dropped to their lowest values of the month. During this time no use of auxiliary energy was required or used.

Since the system was operated in a warm weather mode, the performance analysis for May will address the warm weather operation concern for a passive system-potential conditioned space overheating. Temperatures inside the building were maintained at reasonably comfortable levels during the majority of the month. Late afternoon building temperatures occasionally reached values above 75°F. These higher temperatures were generally due to direct heating from the greenhouse as the sliding glass doors between the house and greenhouse areas were opened. Also contributing to the higher afternoon temperatures was energy admitted through the west facing window in the master bedroom when the window shade was open.

On most days, only small variations in building temperature were observed, even when considerable amounts of solar energy were available. The average difference in daily minimum and maximum building temperatures was only 4°F. Building temperatures dropped below 70°F only early in the morning as a result of nighttime venting and during the cool weather period during the second week of the month.

### D. Observations

Several changes to the numbers in the attached computer printout are made for warm weather reporting of passive systems. The building is assumed to not have a heating load. Consequently the values of the heating load are set to zero. The performance factors relating to energy collection do not apply for the warm weather periods since the task for a passive system in warm weather is energy rejection as opposed to energy collection.

In past months a problem with high interior relative humidity has been encountered. Increases in interior relative humidity were found to correlate with operation of the greenhouse to rock bed fans. During May the fans were only occasionally used. However, considerable increases in interior relative humidity were observed on several days. These increases in interior relative humidity were found to correlate with periods of time when the sliding glass doors between the house and greenhouse were open. Consequently, it was concluded that the relative humidity problems previously encountered were due to excess moisture in the greenhouse area. This highly humid air enters the house either through the sliding glass door areas or via the rock bed when charging of the rock bed occurs. Effort is planned by the homeowner during the summer to alter the charging operation of the greenhouse fans so that return air will not pass through the house area, thus preventing the excess moisture from entering the house during the winter.

### E. Energy Savings

An energy penalty of 1,000 Btu (0.3 kwh) of electrical energy was incurred due to incidental operation of the greenhouse to rock storage fans.

### III. ACTION STATUS

One air flow sensor remains inoperative, but the missing data does not alter computed system performance. The instrumentation of the wood stove operation is being changed from a thermal switch to a stove surface temperature measurement in order to quantify both the heating rate of the wood stove and the effect of the stove on comfort.

## SOLAR HEATING AND COOLING DEMONSTRATION PROSEAM

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## SOLAR HEATING AND COOLING DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

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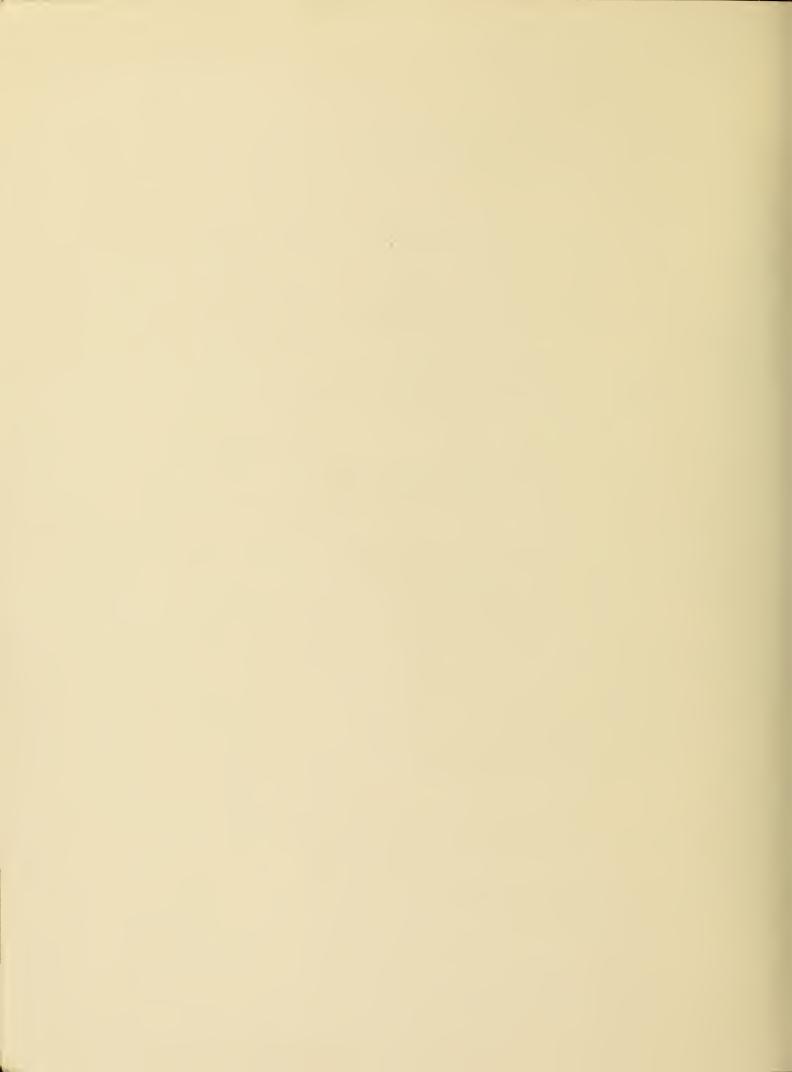
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